

Test results received on Gladstone fish samples

The temporary fishing closure in an area centred on Gladstone Harbour will remain in place while further testing is carried out on conditions affecting some locally-caught fish.

Fisheries Queensland General Manager of Habitat and Assessment Dr John Robertson said initial test results identified two conditions, red-spot disease and a parasite.

"Red-spot disease is endemic and is seen in Queensland waters occasionally, and usually occurs either during the winter months when the immunity of the fish is lower, or following the first heavy rainfall of the wet season" Dr Robertson said.

Red-spot disease starts with a red spot, hence the name, but can develop into burn-like marks, or ulcers with red centres. It is typically caused by a fungus and often occurs in fish when they are under stress.

Dr Robertson said more research was needed into the parasite, which affected the eye of the fish. "We now know that this parasite is what has been causing the cloudy eyes in some barramundi in the area. We still have more to learn about this condition and how it is affecting fish within the area."

Additional testing is being conducted on newly received samples of other fish species, prawns and mud crabs but results are not expected for several weeks.

The temporary fishing closure will remain in place at this stage and is the area between Deception Creek at the top end of The Narrows down to Rodds Peninsula and to the outer edge

of Facing Island and applies to all tidal waters including rivers, creeks and other waterways.

"While the temporary closure is in place commercial, charter and recreational fishing, including catch and release, are not permitted" said Dr. Robertson.

Waters upstream of the Awoonga Dam wall are still open to recreational fishers and licensed commercial fishers can still operate outside the closed area.

Queensland Health Acting Chief Health Officer, Dr Michael Cleary said seafood that showed signs of damage, deterioration or disease should not be consumed.

"As at all times, any fish that show signs of illness are not fit for human consumption," Dr Cleary said.

The closure ensures that any fish that are potentially unsuitable for human consumption will not enter the food chain.

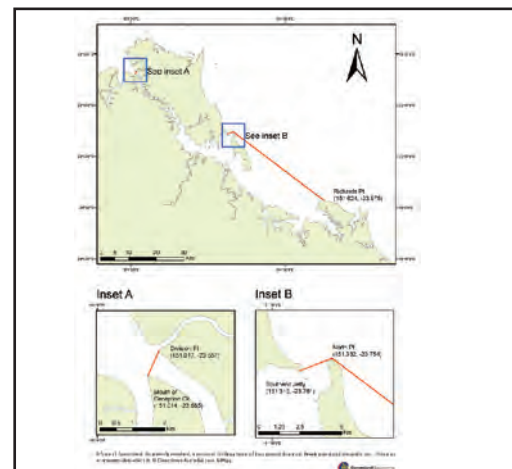


Photo of the month



It is not very easy to photograph Con Mellis of Ash Bros Seafoods Pty. Ltd. One of the reasons that it is hard is because he shuns the limelight and secondly because he never stands still long enough. He is always writing out orders or helping shift bins of seafood. This time I literally had to corner him up against a wall to get his opinions about the Melbourne Seafood Centre of which Ash Bros are one of the partners.

Con has been in seafood wholesale for over twenty years

and during the end days of the Melbourne Wholesale Fish Market (MWF), at the end of the last financial year, dedicated much time and energy to stay at the site under its current operating name 'The Melbourne Seafood Centre', until February 2012. Con believes that by remaining at the current site until the new premises at Kensington Road, West Melbourne are complete has helped the seafood industry, but at the same time says "We look forward to everyone being rewarded at the new Market and for the whole industry to progress."

Differing opinions

According to ABC News, fishing crews and environmentalists are "opposed on the future of Australian southern bluefin tuna quota."

At the international meeting of the commission for tuna conservation held in Bali, Indonesia, different opinions were expressed, regarding quotas, by industry representatives and environmental organisations.

Australia's tuna quota was cut by 20 per cent in

2009 but according to the industry representative Mr. Brian Jeffries the quota should be raised as there has been a rebounding of tuna stocks.

The Humane Society International on the other hand however, wants tuna fishing stopped even if there has been a rise in tuna numbers.

At the time of going to press there had not been a final decision made on quotas by the Commission.

Education & Promotion

Two very good quality and high standard DVD's have been produced by two different organisations that deal with

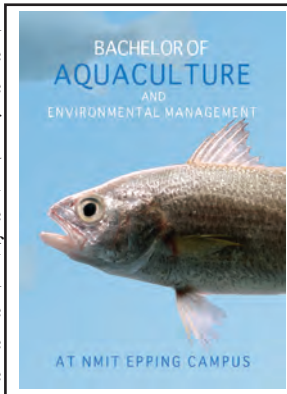
seafood in Melbourne. Both productions are promotional, one is for the Bachelor of Aquaculture and Environmental Management at the Epping Campus of the Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) while the other is for the Melbourne Seafood Centre.

The Bachelor of Aquaculture was produced by final year students from the Screen and Media Department, Film and Television Unit at NMIT. It was written and directed by Thomas Argyropoulos. It is a very informative pro-

duction with commentary from lecturers and current students doing the course. Well done.

The other DVD is on behalf of the Melbourne

Seafood Centre and was produced by Visual DeLight. Its aim is to promote the new facility with comments from wholesalers and retailers on how they view the new centre. It has very good still photography of the construction works at Kensington Road. It is also a thank you note to the current Victorian State Government whom wholesalers acknowledge that through its support and intervention, the Victorian seafood industry is able to continue to provide quality seafood to city and country Victoria. It was directed by Damian Brierty.



SEAFOOD NEWS

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Education & Promotion

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Seafood at Taste of Melbourne



Marisa

Ban to cost \$2-3 million

On deaf ears



We don't know exactly what football instructions Malcolm McLaughlin was giving the snapper just before the 2011 AFL Grand Final, but we can be quite certain that they were falling on deaf ears. Malcolm, a staunch Essendon supporter, was wearing the Essendon hat that was given to him as a present by his grandchildren on Father's Day. If he thinks that the hat will be a "must have" fashion accessory for next year's footy season, all we can say is "good luck" to him and to Collingwood.

Tasmanian oyster industry on world stage

The recent oyster symposium with its theme of "Embracing the Future through Innovation" was held in Hobart Tasmania. Over 200 international delegates looked at issues such as supply chain management, product diversification, environmental and biosecurity risks, marketing and innovation.

Tasmania currently produces almost four million dozen oysters a year and employs over 300 people at marine farms and hatcheries in regional areas around the State.

The industry is worth well over \$20 million a year and its oysters are sought after as a premium quality product.

The Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Mr. Bryan Green, said it was the first time the event had been held outside Asia and was an ideal opportunity to promote Tasmania's oyster industry.

"The oyster industry makes a significant contribution to Tasmania's economy and there are good prospects for future growth," Mr Green said.

"The oyster industry is highly valued and supported by Government, it has a bright future but also faces challenges on how to improve profitability, sustainability and manage production risks" said Minister Green.



Garry and Bruce Zippel with Bob Cox at the symposium. Photo courtesy of Mary Brewer



Illustration: Con Aslanis

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Diseased, dying and dead marine life blamed on dredging

The Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) has called on the Queensland Government to self impose a halt on its dredging operations in Gladstone Harbour until the latest environmental issues have been resolved.

"The temporary self-imposed halt to dredging at Fisherman's Landing because of leaks in the bund wall and unacceptable levels of turbidity in the harbour should be continued until the public can be reassured about future operations," QSIA President Michael Gardner said.

According to Mr. Gardener the leaking through the bund wall in the reclamation area at Fisherman's Landing is causing unacceptable levels of turbidity, the dumping of the same dredge spoil material off the front of Facing Island is surely, causing serious turbidity problems there also.

Fishermen are convinced the dredging operations in the harbour are responsible for the diseased, dying and dead marine life and compound existing problems such as the ban on fishing in the harbour.

"We believe the Queensland Government should halt dredging operations till these issues are sorted out. We believe what is happening in Gladstone is an environmental disaster. It needs the Government to resolve these issues quickly, said Mr. Gardener.

QSIA was extremely concerned to read a Gladstone Port Corporation media release that there was water and spoil material seepage through Fishermans Landing bund wall. The QSIA has written to Environment Minister Vicky Darling requesting no further dredge spoil be dumped at the site until the bund wall is completely sealed.

"We have also requested comprehensive information on the reporting and assessment process in place to monitor the construction and dredging operations. We also want to know who the operator reports to, and if the Minister's department was aware of the problem and ordered the dredging operation be stopped or rather was this a decision taken by the Gladstone Port Corporation of their own volition" said Mr. Gardener.

Imported seafood accounts for more than 70% of our consumption

The release of the "Study of the Composition, Value and Utilisation of Imported Seafood in Australia" by Ruello and Associates Pty Ltd for the Australian Government's Fisheries Research and Development Corporation illuminates a number of issues. Issues which members of the Australian seafood industry and beyond may not be aware of.

The study has covered seven objectives that range from types, volumes and landed price of major and selected imports to sustainability and biosecurity activities in the key exporting countries.

There has been considerable latent industry interest in getting "better" import statistics until very recent work by Seafood Services Australia with its Trade Access Forum (TAF) that has been focussing on export matters.

Seafood Services Australia is currently working with ABARES/ABS with the aim of making more timely import and export statistics available on its website at minimal cost to industry.

Composition of the seafood import sector, according to product category can best be summarized as:

- Frozen seafood importers 57%
- Fresh seafood importers 18%
- General food importers or occasional seafood imports 15%
- Fresh and frozen seafood importers 10%

The majority of businesses in the frozen importer category above buy and sell Australian products too but imports are invariably the predominant part of their business. With fresh seafood importers the situation is the reverse with imports typically making up the minority of the overall business activity.

For this particular study, sixty eight confirmed imported businesses participated in the study, while conceding that there are undoubtedly more companies importing. Most of the unidentified ones are likely to be small scale operators.

Twenty seven of the 68 active importers participating in this study in some way were members of the Seafood Importers Association of Australasia, (SIAA) whose membership consists predominantly of mid and large scale importers of frozen seafood.

The medium and larger companies typically

Tasmania's new Rock Lobster Management Plan

After an 18-month review and consultation with key commercial and recreational stakeholders, Tasmania's Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Mr. Bryan Green, has released a new management plan for Tasmania's Rock Lobster fishery, designed to ensure that the State has a sustainable fishery for the long term.

Mr Green said rock lobster numbers had continued falling over the past five years despite efforts to counter the declining stocks. The aim was to develop a plan that balanced the issues facing the fishery with the concerns of the rock lobster industry and recreational fishers.

The new rules will be in place for the new recreational season which opens on November 5 whereas the commercial season begins 10 days later.

This new management plan builds on a reduction, of approximately 28 per cent, to the total allowable catch for the commercial fishery over the past three years.

Mr Green said the under-catch provisions

where an uncaught quota could be carried over to the next season has been removed.

"We recognise there are challenges facing the industry which have been compounded by Chinese market access issues and I have asked my Department to look at ways of assisting the commercial fishery said Mr. Green.

Changes for recreational fishers include reduced bag limits on the East Coast, on water boat limits and reduced possession limits for non-licensed fishers.

The new bag limit on the East Coast will be three per day and there will be an on water possession limit of six for multiple day trips. The limit for those on land without a licence will be two.

The new arrangements will be detailed in the Recreational Sea Fishing Guide to be released in October and is currently on the DPIPW website, together with a summary of the changes, at www.fishing.tas.gov.au. A report on the outcomes of public consultation is also available on the website.

Ban to cost \$2-3 million

Kyri Toumazos, a professional fisherman, from the South Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishing Association believes the temporary ban on gill net fishing off the South Australian coast will force the closure of a number of full-time operators based at Robe and also affect seasonal operators like himself.

Mr. Toumazos estimates that the ban, which covers 27,000 square miles, and has been imposed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority due to a number of dolphins caught in nets over year, will cost fishermen between \$2-3 million turnover annually.

had been established for long periods (over 20 years) and had long standing relationships with overseas suppliers and customers in Australia; the family owned businesses typically had more than one generation at work in importing or other functions such as wholesaling or retail and extensive seafood marketing expertise.

Geographically the vast majority of importing businesses are located in the capital cities; only six were located in regional centres, in four states.

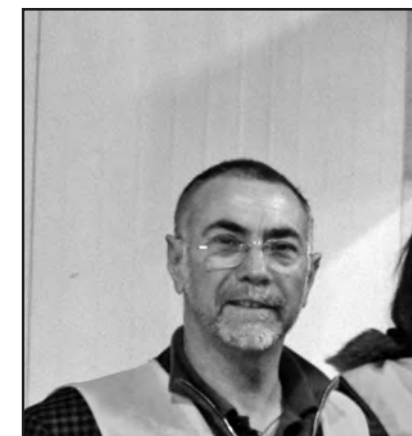
The larger companies distributed many of the strong selling foreign brands. The larger/longer established companies were also active in supplying the supermarket chains as well as other importers and major seafood wholesalers

In Sydney and Melbourne, fresh seafood importers/wholesalers tend to be located at the central fish markets and are suppliers to retailers who patronise the markets. as well as food service businesses.

The annual import volumes of the dozen fresh/chilled importers ranged from less than 50 up to 1000 tonnes per annum with most at the 5-10 tonne per week level. Most of the fresh seafood is from New Zealand but some businesses are sourcing reef fish and barramundi products from nearby Asian nations such as Indonesia and Malaysia and occasionally fresh fish is sourced from further afield.

Australia has been reliant on importing seafood to meet demand for human consumption since the 1950's. Today the four major sources of key imports are, Thailand, New Zealand, Vietnam and China.

The study has estimated that imports account for more than 70% of Australia's seafood consumption volume and will continue to underpin supply, consumption and profitability for the post harvest sector of the Australian seafood industry and the seafood related revenue of the food service sector.



Mr. Nick Ruello author of "Study of the Composition, Value and Utilisation of Imported Seafood in Australia"

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In brief

Victoria abolishes bag limit on red fish

The Victorian Coalition Government has abolished the recreational bag limit for redfin in Victoria resolving a frustrating cross border anomaly for recreational fishers.

Victoria's Minister for Agriculture and Food Security Mr. Peter Walsh said from now on, it wouldn't matter whether anglers were fishing in NSW or Victorian waters, they could keep as many redfin as they could catch.

The move brings Victoria into line with regulations in NSW. The difference has been a source of frustration for fishers, who sometimes get caught out when they are moving between NSW and Victorian waters.

Redfin are a popular species among freshwater anglers because they are a tasty table-fish, however there is increasing evidence that redfin are harmful to native fish and other popular sport fish such as trout.

"We are conscious however of the impact the species has on other valued native and sport fish such as trout and salmon," Mr Walsh said.

The decision to remove the bag limit of 30 redfin has received support from VR Fish and fishers who attended recent Regional Recreational Fishing Forums.



Trout season opening marred by illegal bait users

A number of Melbourne men will be fined after being caught using illegal bait to catch fish during the opening weekend of the trout season.

Northern Victoria's Fisheries Operations Manager, Mike Hosking said the men were

caught using fish eggs as bait.

"Anglers should be aware Fisheries Officers will not only inspect licences but will also continue to routinely inspect anglers' bait, cool boxes, vehicles and fish caught on the day," Mr Hosking said.



Historic facility to close

After 110 years as the first scientific fisheries research facility in the southern hemisphere, The Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre, located at Gunnamatta Bay, is closing down.

The facility, which is the headquarters for recreational and commercial fisheries

research in NSW, has many heritage listed buildings including the aquarium which was also the first of its type in the southern hemisphere. The aquarium is to be relocated to a NSW regional centre.

The shift will cost the jobs of 150 staff, the majority of whom live locally.



Illegal abalone catch costly for Melbourne man

A 42 year old Melbourne man is more than \$2,000 out of pocket after pleading guilty to illegally taking abalone at Cape Conran, east of Marlo, Victoria, in January this year.

The Orbost Magistrates Court heard that the man who resides in the Melbourne suburb of

Sunshine West, was intercepted by Fisheries Officers at West Cape and originally claimed he had taken no fish.

A subsequent inspection of his four-wheel-drive vehicle uncovered 21 abalone, seven of them undersize and five wrasse.

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Fees fund small scale projects

Revenue from the sale of recreational fishing licences has funded 14 new small projects to improve opportunities for recreational fishers in Victoria.

Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, Peter Walsh, said the projects were funded through the Small Grants Program.

The Small Grants Program is open year round to fishing clubs and associations, not-for-profit organisations, schools and government agencies and incorporated bodies, for grants of up to \$5000.

The 14 small grants announced include:

- ♦ \$5000 to conduct a 'Water Safety (Rock Fishing) Education Day' for new migrants at Queenscliff.
- ♦ \$4570 towards the Lakes Entrance Fishing Convention.
- ♦ \$4550 to Yarra Valley Fly Fishers Inc. for a 'Community Fishing Festival' at Lilydale Lake.
- ♦ \$3850 for a 'Recreational Fishing Expo' at Wonthaggi to promote safe and responsible fishing practices to the community, including new migrants to the Bass Coast.
- ♦ \$3180 to the Association of Geelong & District Angling Clubs Inc. to conduct the annual 'Ron Nelson Memorial Junior Fishing Clinic' at Seagull Lake.
- ♦ \$2000 for a junior fishing event on the Franklin River run by the Port Franklin Tennis and Sport Club.
- ♦ \$1894 to the Game Fishing Association of Victoria to produce and distribute a game fishing promotional flyer.
- ♦ \$1800 to the 2012 Prom Coast Summer Festival.
- ♦ \$1360 to VRFish so a member can attend

the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) native fish strategy forum.

- ♦ \$1350 for a 'Family Fishing Day' at Port Welshpool.
- ♦ \$1200 to the Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club for a 'Kids Come and Try Fishing Day' at Yarrambat Park Lake.
- ♦ \$975 to Native Fish Australia so a representative can attend the MDBA native fish strategy forum in Canberra.
- ♦ \$805 to the Fawknor & Merlynston Angling Club Inc. to conduct a 'Kids Come and Try Fishing Day' at Jack Roper Reserve Lake.
- ♦ \$631 to the Ballarat District Anglers Association for a 'Kids Come and Try Fishing Day' at Victoria Park Lakes.

Mr Walsh said from October 1 organisations with good ideas for recreational fishing projects could also apply for large grants under the 2011-12 Recreational Fishing Grants Program. "We want to help those angling groups and local government agencies who know what needs to be done to improve fishing opportunities in their local area," Mr Walsh said.

Large grants are available for projects of up to \$100,000 for sustainability and habitat improvement, fishing access and facilities, education, information and training and recreational fisheries research.

Large grant submissions must be received by February 29, 2012, and are open to fishing clubs, community groups, incorporated bodies, registered companies and government and statutory bodies.

To apply or for more information visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/fishinggrants



Millions of native fish for Victorians

The Victorian Government has stocked more than two million native fish into Victorian lakes and rivers to improve inland angling opportunities for recreational fishers.

"Never before have two million fish been released into Victoria's waterways," said Victoria's Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, Mr. Peter Walsh. The fish, including golden perch, Murray cod, Australian bass, sil-

ver perch, trout cod and Macquarie perch were stocked across more than 80 lakes and rivers.

Mr Walsh said the recovery of drought-affected fisheries had been prioritised, with extra funds from recreational fishing licence revenue used to boost stocking numbers. A report prepared for VRFish estimates that, in north east Victoria alone, the recreational fishing industry creates 1100 jobs and an annual turnover of almost \$178 million.

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SEAFOOD NEWS 2

Seafood at “Taste of Melbourne”



L-R: Damian, Jenny and Elena took time out from serving customers, to quickly have this photo taken. Things were very busy.



Conditions at the Tassal stand were no easier all were trying to keep up with demand for the barbecued skewer of salmon.



Staff at at Regal were taken by surprise when we asked them if we could take their photo. Having their photo taken didn't stop them from continuing to serve plates of excellent salmon to their customers.

On Friday night, Galla Night, at the Taste of Melbourne event held at The Royal Exhibition Building, seafood was one of the most popular foodstuffs available.

Exhibitors were literally run off their feet trying to keep up with patron's demands. Nevertheless they were kind enough to let us take their photograph, even if it was very quickly.

Queues at Huon's, Tassal's and New Zealand's Regal Salmon stands were very long. Regal's supplies for the night were consumed by visitors well before the night was over.

The city's food and wine aficionados sampled an amazing fare from some of Melbourne's top restaurants as well as an exceptional line up of the country's best food and drink producers.

Specially printed “Crowns” were the official currency used at Taste for visitors to purchase dishes, drinks and gourmet goodies from the restaurants, bars and the exhibiting producers. One Crown was equal to \$1 and restaurant dishes were priced between 8-12 Crowns. Crowns could be purchased on the day from the Taste Banks and from the roaming Crown sellers.

MSC program on rise in Australia



More than 50 key representatives from the Australian seafood industry attended the first MSC Stakeholder Seminar at the Sydney Fish

More than 50 key representatives from Australia's seafood industry attended the Marine Stewardship Council's (ANZ) first Stakeholder Seminar held at the Sydney Fish Markets in September. Such a good attendance indicates that interest in the MSC program is growing in Australia.

Representatives from government, fisheries, NGOs and the seafood supply chain came together to learn more about the MSC program and to have their queries answered by Marine Stewardship Council experts, including Product Integrity Manager, Nicolas Viart; Asia Pacific Fisheries Manager, Maylynn Nunn and MSC Manager ANZ, Patrick Caleo.

“The interest in the MSC program in Australia and New Zealand is certainly growing in momentum, and it was great to see so many important industry and government representatives there on the day. There was definitely some healthy debate that took place and I hope all concerned walked away knowing more about the program and how it works,” said Mr. Patrick Caleo.

Topics discussed at the event included an update on the progress made by the MSC in Australia, New Zealand and the wider Asia

Pacific region in recent times, as well as, detailed information concerning the fisheries assessment and certification process and the MSC Chain of Custody standard.

Australia's largest retailer discussed their new sustainable seafood sourcing policy.

A presentation was also given by Woolworths Business Manager Seafood Buying and Marketing, Donald Keith, who outlined the major Australian retailer's recent decision to implement a sustainable seafood sourcing policy across their stores, which includes the sourcing of MSC certified products, and also their commitment to assisting fisheries enter the MSC assessment process.

This was followed by a question and answer session where a variety of issues relating to the MSC were discussed.

There are currently four MSC certified fisheries in Australia, and another three fisheries certified in New Zealand. There are also an additional seven fisheries in MSC assessment in the ANZ. In total, there are more than 115 MSC labelled products available in Australia. These numbers are set to increase considerably as the interest in the MSC program grows here.

Marine heatwave prompts abalone fishing closure

An unprecedented marine heatwave has led to the total closure of abalone fishing, from Moore River to Western Australia's border with the Northern Territory (NT).

South West Bioregions Manager for the Department of Fisheries, Kevin Donohue said the Fisheries Minister Norman Moore had taken the precautionary step, following consultation with the West Coast Abalone Divers Association and Recfishwest.

Both groups and the Department of Fisheries recommended the closure after significant mortalities in abalone stocks, particularly north of Kalbarri, during the marine heatwave.

Marine scientists tracked an extensive patch of very warm water that grew and moved southwards from November 2010 and did not dissipate until late March.

Sea temperatures in many areas were more than three degrees above average and the warmest ever recorded in some places. That not only devastated mid west and northern abalone stocks, but impacted on other fish species too.

Full stock assessment of abalone, north of Moore River, will take place during the next 12 months, and that prohibitions or restrictions might be required over several seasons to allow the abalone stocks to recover.

“The time required to rebuild stocks can't be

determined at this stage, but the department will seek ways of enhancing the restoration of abalone stocks,” said Mr. Donohue.

Commercial abalone fishing operators have already voluntarily agreed not to fish stocks in the area affected by the marine heatwave.

The Northern Zone recreational abalone fishing season (from Greenough River to the NT border) normally runs from 1 October to the 15 May, but will not be open this year, however, the Southern Zone (between the Busselton Jetty and the South Australian border), which shares the same season dates with the Northern Zone, will be open as normal next month.

Mr Donohue said part of the closure area also impacted on the West Coast Zone and no abalone fishing would be allowed between Moore River and the Greenough River.

“For the rest of the West Coast Zone, from Moore River and Busselton Jetty, fishing will begin on 6 November and be allowed for one hour only (7-8am) on that day and for one hour only (7-8am) on the first Sundays of December, January, February and March,” he said.

As this closure may mean fishers holding recreational abalone licences will not be able to fish as planned, the Department of Fisheries will refund the licence fee. Fishers requiring a refund should contact the department on 9482 7333 and make application before 31 October 2011.



OCTOBER 2011

“Productivity”

FRDC principal sponsor



Trevor Burkart from Burkart Fisheries in Ward who with his brother Dennis organised a tour of lobster facilities for delegates to the Trans Tasman Rock Lobster Industry conference. Delegates on the tour were Wayne Hosking from Geraldton Fishermen's Co-Op, John Newby, Chairman of the Western Rock Lobster Council, Brian Moriarty from Ngāi Tahu Seafoods.

The 7th Trans-Tasman Rock Lobster Industry Conference held recently at the Marlborough Convention Centre, Blenheim, New Zealand involved the catching, processing, export and marketing and transport sectors of the New Zealand and Australian lobster industries.

The conference was structured in such a way to enable the participation of industry representatives from all Australian and New Zealand lobster fisheries.

Both Australia and New Zealand share a common species – cold water southern rock lobster, *Jasus edwardsii*, whilst Australia also produces western and tropical rock lobsters, *Panulirus* species, from temperate and warm waters in Western Australia and Queensland respectively.

The exchange of information and ideas of this years conference is aimed at streamlining and accelerating stock rebuilding initiatives, improve industry productivity and enable greater efficiency gains in terms of research and compliance across the various fisheries' jurisdictions.

Another aim of the conference was to assist the Australian and New Zealand rock lobster fisheries to operate sustainably in a secure and profitable manner by ensuring the productivity of their respective lobster stocks through effective marketing strategies and partnerships with their relevant Government agencies.

A significant volume of rock lobster produc-

tion from both countries is exported and the price paid to fishermen for their catches is therefore highly dependent on the exchange rates in relation to the US dollar (the currency with which the export trade is transacted).

Australian rock lobster fisheries constitute a range of the most economically valuable seafood industry components of the Australian economy. Despite a 16 per cent decrease in the volume of production, the combined Australian lobster fisheries generated a landed value of AU\$403.8 million in 2008-09, ranking as the most economically valuable of the wild catch fisheries.

New Zealand rock lobster exports generated an estimated NZ\$184 million in 2010 and the rock lobster fisheries remain the most economically valuable of all New Zealand inshore fisheries. Despite adverse exchange rates against the New Zealand dollar there has been a strong demand from the Chinese market and a willingness of buyers to pay premiums at peak consumption periods.

This year's conference has seen an increase in the number of New Zealand delegates and representatives from the nine New Zealand rock lobster fisheries management areas. The New Zealand industry participation will include fishermen, quota share owners, fishing company managers, processors, exporters and marketing personnel.

The Australian Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) was the principal sponsor of the event.

Pink snapper can live to nearly 40

The annual pink snapper spawning closure in Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds, Western Australia, is now in force and recreational fishers are reminded of the importance the fishing break provides to the species.

South West Bioregions Manager, Kevin Donohue, said it was essential that fishers observed the closure to pink snapper fishing that applied in the Sounds.

The four month spawning closure, which

began on Saturday 1st of October, runs until Wednesday 1st February 2012. Pink snapper are slow-growing and can live to nearly 40 years of age.

Research tagging work has shown pink snapper will travel considerable distances to join the spawning aggregation and Cockburn and Warnbro Sounds are the most important nursery area for pink snapper in the West Coast Bioregion (that extends from near Augusta in the South to north of Kalbarri).

Marisa's Recipes

www.allthingsicilianandmore.blogspot.com



MINESTRA DI PESCE (Fish Soup)



Because of my Italian background, if I say ‘fish soup’ I usually think of recipes like those from countries around the Mediterranean like Zuppa di Pesce (Italy), Zarzuela (Spain), Bouillabaisse (France), Kakavia (Greece) or maybe Aljotta (Malta). Some soups are served with bread, others with croutons, some add extra flavour by adding a soffritto, rouille or aioli – which all have garlic as the essential ingredient. There are many local variations to the recipes in each of these countries and the names may differ, but all these soups are really like chunky fish stews.

This fish soup recipe is very different to those. It is made with a variety of vegetables and it could be made in any region of Italy. I like to eat it as a thick soup, packed with vegetables and little fish, but some may prefer it with more broth, less vegetables and more fish.

There is no reason why you could not vary the range of vegetables. Add some spring seasonal vegetables – use some asparagus, peas and fresh green beans.

I have used only one fish, a Red Gurnard. This is an ugly looking fish but it is inexpensive, sustainable and great tasting.

To make fish stock and cook the fish, cover the whole fish with cold water (5-6 cups to make soup for 6 people), add a little salt, a stalk of celery, a carrot, a small onion and a bay leaf – I leave all of these whole. Bring to the boil and poach until the fish is cooked. Drain the broth, remove the flesh from the fish (keep it in large pieces); keep the broth and the fish and discard the vegetables and the bones.

Alternatively, use a good quality fish stock and fresh, fish fillets (select a non-oily, fleshy fish).

INGREDIENTS

1 whole fish and vegetables: make fish stock as above
 ½ cup of extra virgin olive oil
 1 clove of garlic
 2 spring onions
 2 zucchini
 1 carrot
 1 celery heart
 1 potato
 4 outside leaves of lettuce (iceberg, butter or romaine)
 1 tomato or 1 tablespoon of tomato paste
 ½ cup of chopped parsley
 salt and 1 chopped, fresh chilli or freshly ground black pepper to taste

PROCESSES

Slice or cube all vegetables into small pieces. Heat the oil in a saucepan (large enough to hold all of the ingredients) and sauté the vegetables except for the tomato (or paste). Cook for a couple of minutes, stirring constantly. Add fish stock, seasoning and tomato. Cover and cook until the vegetables are soft and to your liking. Add the cooked pieces of fish, heat through and serve. If using uncooked fish fillets, cut them into manageable pieces, add these to the hot soup, cover and cook the fish to your liking.

“Sicilian Seafood Cooking”

Marisa's new cookery book “Sicilian Seafood Cooking” will be launched at CoAsIt, the Italian Historical Society and Museo Italiano, at 189 Faraday Street, Carlton Victoria on Sunday 6 November at 3.30pm. Her dedication to Sicilian cookery is well known and we intend to bring to our readers a more detailed presentation of the book in our next issue.